



Office of the President

NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

November 20, 2020

Dear Lumberjacks,

I am deeply gratified that we pulled together as one Lumberjack family to successfully complete the fall 2020 semester amid a global health crisis. Since this is an appropriate time of the year to give thanks, I'd like to once again thank each of you for taking care of yourselves and working to support the health and safety of our campus and community.

This is not only a time of thanks, but a time for celebration. Most notable on the list of celebrations is Sunday's virtual commencement, honoring more than 2,500 extraordinary Lumberjack graduates. The accomplishments of the Class of 2020 demonstrate their resilience and persistence in the face of challenges none of us had experienced until this year. We also celebrate all that our students have done to keep others safe, their volunteer and research efforts during the pandemic, and the people in their lives who mentored and supported them throughout their journey. I am certain that no matter what comes their way, the Class of 2020's experience as Lumberjacks, which includes their education but goes beyond to the leadership skills they have acquired and the relationships that have enriched their lives, will help them find personal and career success. I hope you will join me in participating in this **special commencement ceremony** at 1 p.m. Sunday.

Lumberjack students, faculty, and staff are not only accomplished, they are compassionate. Proof of this is their many contributions of food and financial resources to support Louie's Cupboard, which distributed 50 Thanksgiving-themed meal kits to students today. Lumberjacks have demonstrated their care for others by participating in COVID-19 mitigation testing; the record number of tests taken this week is a testimony to how much you care about keeping your family and friends safe.

As we move into the semester break, remember that NAU is offering 4-, 5-, and 6-week winter term classes over the break, along with free academic support resources virtually, including **tutoring** and **peer academic coaching**. Please continue checking your emails throughout the winter break as we will provide updates and share information important to your return to campus in January.

Stay mentally and physically strong and healthy as the end of finals and the end of the semester is in sight. Meanwhile, I can report that as of this afternoon, NAU is managing

65 cases among students on- and off-campus, up from 46 last week. Updates can be found on [NAU's COVID-19 page](#).

Please continue to maintain good health and safety practices over the winter break, including wearing a mask, physically distancing, and washing your hands.

Tom and I wish you and yours a happy Thanksgiving. I am proud of all that we have achieved together, and we look forward to seeing you safe and back on campus in January.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rita", written in a cursive style.

Rita Hartung Cheng
President